

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report for the January 17, 2007 Meeting

DATE: January 9, 2007

1. NCTC PROJECTS IN THE STIP

Commissioner Beason suggested that with the start of a new year, with new members coming on the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC), and with new funding opportunities coming from the State, it was a good time to review the status of NCTC projects and funding programs. NCTC has three projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):

Dorsey Drive Interchange
SR 49/La Barr Meadows Road Signalization and Widening
SR 89 Widening at the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Underpass
("Mousehole")

Description of these projects and their funding status follows the overview of the STIP funding process.

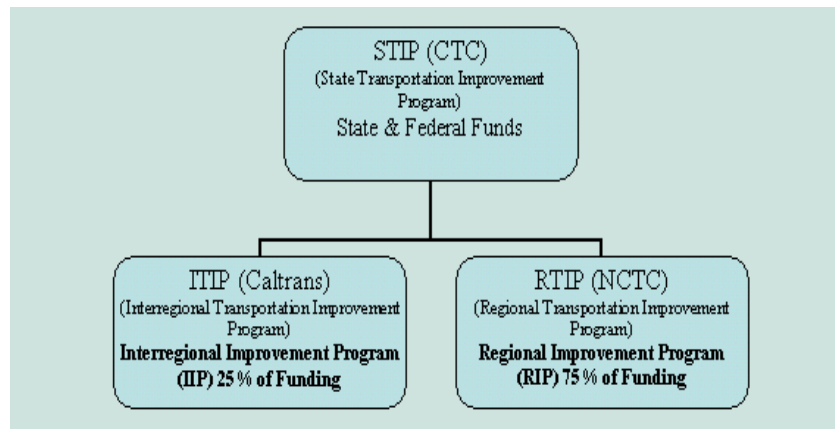
STIP Funding Process

Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), like the Nevada County Transportation Commission, are tasked with integrating the planning efforts of cities, counties, and Caltrans into a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The funds for transportation improvements identified in the RTP are the glue that keeps the local, regional, and state agencies working together.

NCTC submits regional transportation projects to the State for funding in a list called the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). Projects from each county are approved by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and are combined into a statewide document called the STIP. The RTIP and STIP are five-year programs proposing projects at the county and state levels. When the CTC adds projects from the regional programs into the State program, a schedule for proposed funding is established and these projects are considered "programmed." A project must be programmed into the STIP to be given funding by the CTC.

The diagram below shows the flow of State and Federal revenues down to each region for expenditure, and also to Caltrans for planning of projects in cooperation with the counties. 75% of the STIP funds flow to the Regional Improvement Program (RIP). The RIP is a combination of

State and Federal transportation funds given to the region to improve the transportation system. NCTC's share of RIP funds averages about \$2.0 million per year. Caltrans is given 25% of STIP funds. These funds are called the Interregional Improvement Program (IIP). IIP funds are used for improvements and capacity-increasing projects outside of urban areas.



If Caltrans and a regional agency agree on a transportation need, they can recommend a project to be jointly funded from the RIP and IIP funds. Good examples of this kind of partnership are the widening of SR 49 from the Bear River Bridge to the Wolf/Combie Road intersection, and the proposed signalization and widening project near the SR 49/LaBarr Meadows Road intersection.

A programmed project does not get funds to proceed to construction until the CTC "allocates" funding (authorizes a check to be cut). Before the 2002 STIP, once a project was programmed it was pretty much assured of moving to completion. However, State budget issues between 2002 and 2004 led to cuts in the State Transportation Funding revenues. During those years, no new projects were programmed, and projects already in the STIP were delayed or eliminated.

While there has been no long-term solution to providing adequate funding for STIP projects, the passage of Proposition 1B in 2006 potentially provides some short-term relief.

Dorsey Drive Interchange Project

This project proposes to widen the existing Dorsey Drive overcrossing, and to construct a compact diamond interchange with auxiliary lanes to the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street Interchange to the south, and the Brunswick Road Interchange to the north. The purpose of the interchange is to: (1) provide a more direct access to specific high use sites such as the Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital and Sierra College; (2) relieve operational problems at the existing interchanges at Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street and Brunswick Road; and (3) provide additional capacity for future development in accordance with the adopted City of Grass Valley General Plan and the Draft County General Plan.

The project was first identified by NCTC in 1985, but due to State level policies regarding new interchanges, the project was not included in the STIP until 1998. Development of the project was delayed for extended periods because Caltrans lacked essential staff to work on the project. Then as Caltrans was working on Project Approval and Environmental Documents (PA/ED), the State budget crisis delayed the construction schedule further. In the 2004 and 2006 STIPs, NCTC programmed funds to keep the project moving toward construction; however, construction cost

increases have outpaced the revenues coming to the project, and there is currently a \$16.9 million deficit in the construction portion of the project.

Schedule and Costs

Component	Budget (thousands)	Completion Date Date	Project Funding (thousands)			
			RIP	IIP	RTMF	Total
PA/ED	\$1,200	6/30/06	\$1,200			\$1,200
PS&E	\$2,400	10/31/08	\$2,400			\$2,400
R/W Capital	\$3,484	1/31/09	\$3,484			\$3,484
R/W Support	\$1,100		\$1,100			\$1,100
Const. Capital* (Phase 1)	\$8,475	7/30/12	\$8,475			\$8,475
Const. Support (Phase 1)	\$1,500				\$1,500	\$1,500
Total (Phase 1)	\$18,159		\$16,659	\$0	\$1,500	\$18,159
* The Budget amount was estimated in Jan. 06, the estimated cost in 08/09 is \$9,500 which leaves a const. deficit of \$1,025 in the Phase 1 project.						
Ultimate Project						
Const. Capital	\$24,400		\$8,475			-\$15,925
Const. Support	\$2,500				\$1,500	-\$1,000
Total Const. (08/09)	\$26,900		\$8,475	\$0	\$1,500	-\$16,925

SR 49/La Barr Meadows Road Signalization and Widening Project

The ultimate plan is to widen Route 49 between the Wolf/Combie Road intersection and south of McKnight Way in Grass Valley to four lanes with a continuous two-way left turn lane and in November 2001, NCTC requested an advance of \$39.9 million for this widening of SR 49. The funds were to complete planning, environmental, and design work for the entire corridor, and to fund construction of a first segment. Caltrans supported the submittal and agreed to a 50/50 match in funding for the project. In the 2002 STIP, the CTC responded to NCTC and Caltrans by programming \$18.1 million for the SR 49 corridor. The funds were broken out as follows: \$1.4 million for planning and environmental work, \$7.16 million for right-of-way (R/W), and \$9.6 million for plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E). No funds were identified for construction.

In 2003/04, in recognition of the need to address unacceptable accident rates near the La Barr Meadows Road intersection, NCTC and Caltrans requested that STIP funding be focused on a signalization and widening project in that vicinity. In accordance with the request, the CTC in the 2004 STIP programmed the \$18.1 million as follows: \$3.5 million for planning and environmental work, \$7.6 million for right-of-way, \$1.3 million for design, and \$5.76 million for construction.

In the 2006 STIP, minor adjustments were made to account for escalation in construction costs, but following the STIP adoption, the estimated cost of construction has increased dramatically to where the estimated cost of the construction component is approximately \$20 million. Caltrans is currently working on three options for this project. The first option will scale back construction to the \$5 million level. The second assumes construction funding at approximately \$15 million, and

the third option is full construction at the \$20 million level. Similar to the Dorsey Drive Interchange, costs for this project have increased much more rapidly than revenues from the STIP.

The passage of Proposition 1B in November 2006 offers an opportunity to seek additional funds for this project. Within Proposition 1B, the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) has identified \$4.5 billion dollars statewide for projects that meet the CMIA guidelines. NCTC and Caltrans District 3 submitted a joint proposal to Caltrans headquarters (HQ) for construction funding at the \$20 million level. However, Caltrans HQ did not include the project in their draft CMIA list. Therefore, NCTC staff prepared a submittal directly to the CTC requesting full funding of the construction component (see "Caltrans Cost Summary" below). The submittals are due January 16th.

The CTC is not bound to follow the Caltrans HQ draft list in selecting projects, but having the SR 49 project on that list would have enhanced its chances for selection by the CTC. The CTC is scheduled to adopt projects for the CMIA program on February 28th. In addition to submitting this project to the CTC, staff recommends that NCTC seek funding for this project from Nevada County's State and Federal Legislators.

Current Funding and Schedule

Component	Budget (thousands)	Completion Date	Project Funding (thousands)			
			RIP	IIP	Other	Total
PA/ED	\$3,500	7/30/07	\$1,750	\$1,750		\$3,500
PS&E	\$1,300	11/30/08	\$650	\$650		\$1,300
R/W Capital	\$7,000	1/30/09	\$3,500	\$3,500		\$7,000
R/W Support	\$600	1/30/09	\$300	\$300		\$600
Const. Capital	\$4,902	6/09-6/12	\$2,451	\$2,451		\$4,902
Const. Support	\$1,030		\$515	\$515		\$1,030
Total	\$18,332		\$9,166	\$9,166		\$18,332

Caltrans Cost Summary

La Barr Meadows Project
Programmed Funding and Projected Costs
12/13/06

Component	Budget	Estimate	Deficit
PA/ED	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$0
PS&E	\$1,300,000	\$2,000,000	\$700,000
R/W Support	\$600,000	\$1,500,000	\$900,000
R/W Capital	\$7,000,000	\$9,000,000	\$2,000,000
Const. Support	\$1,030,000	\$3,500,000	\$2,470,000
Const. Capital	\$4,902,000	\$21,000,000*	\$16,098,000
Total	\$18,332,000	\$40,500,000	\$22,168,000

*Construction cost escalated to fiscal year 2009/2010 at 5% annual. The current construction cost estimate is \$18 million.

SR 89 Widening at the UPRR Underpass (Mousehole) Project

The purpose of this project is to:

1. Improve mobility.
2. Improve traffic safety and operations with particular attention to reducing the bicycle/pedestrian conflicts at the grade separation.
3. Use the highway facilities as efficiently as possible.

4. Rehabilitate/overlay the roadway on both sides of the railroad grade separation to the intersections at Deer Creek and West River Street with asphalt concrete.
5. The proposed improvements will bring the highway up to current standards and therefore meet the pertinent safety requirements mandated by the current Caltrans Highway Design Manual.

The need for this project has been identified due to the increase in local, regional, and interregional traffic which results in traffic backups in the Truckee area. Alternative local routes are limited. As peak period traffic increases over time, conditions will deteriorate and make it more difficult for fire, police, and medical personnel to respond to emergencies. This project will result in safety and operational improvements for both local and interregional traffic.

The Town of Truckee and NCTC are providing funding for the PA/ED phase. A Cooperative Agreement has been executed between Caltrans and the Town of Truckee. The total PA/ED support cost is estimated to be \$1,100,000. The Town of Truckee has secured \$2.8 million in Federal Earmark Funds and is using \$880,000 for PA/ED development. Federal Highway Administration requires a 20% non-federal match. NCTC has programmed \$220,000 from Regional Improvement Program funds.

Funding beyond PA/ED has not been identified; therefore, the schedule has not been developed beyond PA/ED. The final Project Report will identify PS&E, R/W, and Construction funding requirements. Although Caltrans has noted that this project will improve both local and interregional traffic, Caltrans has not committed any funds from the Interregional Improvement Program. Without additional State or Federal funding, this project will be unable to proceed to construction.

Current Funding and Schedule

Component	Budget (thousands)	Completion Date	Project Funding (thousands)			
			RIP	IIP	Other	Total
PA/ED	\$1,100	11/30/08	\$220	\$0	\$880	\$1,100
PS&E	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
R/W Capital	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
R/W Support	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Const. Capital	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Const. Support	\$0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	\$1,100		\$220	\$0		\$1,100

2. EAST MAIN ST./IDAHO-MARYLAND RD. INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The engineering firm of Whitlock & Weinburger Transportation, Inc. of Santa Rosa has been retained by the City of Grass Valley to design a roundabout for the East Main Street/Idaho-Maryland Road Intersection. On December 12, 2006, the design team held a public workshop at Grass Valley City Hall to introduce the project and modern roundabout concepts to the public. In a memo dated November 8, 2006, City Engineer Tim Kiser stated that the process to evaluate and design the proposed roundabout will take about eleven months to complete. The current cost estimate is \$1,471,000. Two graphics showing the proposed roundabout are attached.

3. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION MITIGATION FEE UPDATE

At the November meeting, NCTC authorized staff to finalize contracts with the consulting team to update the RTMF. Contracts with PB Americas, Inc. (formerly known as Parsons Brinkerhoff), Fehr & Peers Associates, Inc., and Mark Thomas and Company, Inc. are now in place.

In order for the consulting team to move forward, land use data for 2030 must be developed in accordance with the General Plans of Nevada County, Nevada City, and Grass Valley. NCTC staff has received the 2030 land use data from Nevada County and Nevada City. Grass Valley staff provided residential land use data for 2030 in late December and is finalizing the commercial land use data now. As soon as this information is provided, the 2030 modeling will get underway and the project can proceed.

Also at the November meeting, the Commission recommended that an “interim fee” be considered by the cities and county. On December 11th, Nevada City approved the “interim fee”. The Board of Supervisors considered the interim fee on January 9th, but voted to wait for completion of the RTMF Update project before adopting any change in the fee amounts. On January 9th, the City of Grass Valley approved the “interim fee”. In the two cities, the “interim fee” will become effective sixty days after the date of approval.

4. BRUNSWICK ROAD/SUTTON WAY INTERSECTION

On December 19, 2006, Grass Valley City Engineer Tim Kiser sent a letter (see attached) notifying David DuPell, owner of Big 1 Appliance, that in accordance with the provisions of the agreement between Grass Valley, NCTC, and Mr. DuPell, the City had agreed to accelerate reimbursements to Mr. DuPell, thereby eliminating the need for Mr. DuPell to secure a loan and the City to pay the interest on the loan. The letter requested that Mr. DuPell move forward with construction of the improvements using Hansen Brothers Enterprises as the contractor.

5. FISCAL YEAR 2006/07 TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Due to time spent on preparing the project nomination for the CMIA, the Nevada County Transit Needs Assessment will not be presented to the Commission until its March 21st meeting. The Needs Assessment, along with a recommendation from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council, will provide the basis for the NCTC to make findings in accordance with the Transportation Development Act regarding “unmet transit needs” and the needs that are “reasonable to meet”.

6. COUNTY-WIDE BICYCLE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

On October 17th, NCTC staff issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop a county-wide Bicycle Master Plan (BMP) for Nevada County. The BMP will incorporate and expand on existing and previous bicycle planning efforts in Nevada County, and will seek input from local jurisdictions, citizens, and bicycle advocacy groups. The completion of this project will make all of the jurisdictions in Nevada County eligible to annually submit bicycle projects identified in the BMP for grant funding through the State Bicycle Transportation Account.

Two consulting firms submitted proposals for the project and a selection committee reviewed the proposals and conducted interviews on November 30th. Based on the proposals and oral interviews,

the consulting firm Alta Planning and Design was awarded the contract and have started work on the project. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2007.

7. TRANSIT TRANSFER FACILITY SITE LOCATION STUDY

NCTC staff issued a Request for Proposal for a consulting firm to conduct a study to identify and evaluate several sites for a new Gold Country Stage transit transfer facility and to develop a preliminary design for the facility. Proposals are due by January 31st. Once a consultant has been selected, work on this project will begin in mid-February.

This project is funded with a Caltrans Transit Technical Planning Grant in the amount of \$44,265 and local matching funds in the amount of \$5,735. The completion of this planning effort will facilitate the future use of \$777,747 in Federal Earmark funds for construction of the new transit transfer facility.

attachments